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THE MIAMI HERALD
Miami, Florida
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inspector will watch over troops

Journalists' suit claims ring tried to kill contra

By JAY DUCASSI
And CHRISTINA CHEAKALOS
Herald Staff Writers

In what reads like a Robert Ludlum spy novel, two journalists filed a \$23.8 million lawsuit in Miami Thursday, blaming a ring of former CIA officials, Cuban exiles, Nicaraguan contra leaders, international arms dealers and cocaine smugglers for a bombing in which both reporters were injured.

The lawsuit claims the ring sold cocaine in the United States to fund its activities, including arming Nicaraguan contras, attempting to bomb U.S. embassies in Costa Rica and Honduras, and hiring a Libyan assassin to kill Lewis Tambs, U.S. ambassador to Costa Rica.

According to the suit, filed by the husband-and-wife reporting team of Tony Avirgan and Martha Honey, the 30 defendants hoped the

bombings and assassinations would be blamed on the Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

Avirgan, a stringer for National Public Radio, and Honey, a reporter for the Canadian Broadcasting Co., were hurt when a bomb exploded during a press conference held by Nicaraguan contra leader Eden Pastora on May 30, 1984.

The suit claims the defendants planted the bomb, which killed eight people and wounded more than 25 others.

The group's operations were financed by cocaine smuggling from Colombia to Miami, and the ring laundered the profits through domestic and offshore banks, the suit alleges.

Ted Klein, a Miami attorney who represents one of the 30 defendants, Tamiami Gun Shop owner Ronald Martin, said "the allegations are ridiculous and absurd."

"My first reaction is that this is an April

Fool's joke, but it's too late," Klein said. "This is the best example of the misuse of the courts I've ever seen. It shows what someone can do if they are able to put together a federal court filing fee. Even as a dime-store novel, it's poorly written."

The suit names as defendants Ted Shackley, former associate deputy director for operations for the CIA; Tom Clines, a former CIA training officer; Adolfo Calero, head of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force contra group; and John Singlaub, a former Army major-general who is a major fund-raiser for the contras.

Also named are four members of the Cuban exile organization Brigade 2506 and the heads of several small businesses, including the Tamiami Gun Shop.

At the State Department in Washington, spokesman Charles Redman called the charges "patently ridiculous."



**Eden Pastora: Target of
1984 bomb attack.**

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Rivalries hurt fight for south

CIA betrayed me, Pastora contends

By TIM GOLDEN
Herald Staff Writer

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica — Eden Pastora is trying to explain how the CIA forced him to abandon his war against the Nicaraguan government, but for the third time in 20 minutes, his weakened frame bolts upright and he dashes from

THE CONTRAS

POLICY AT A CROSSROADS
Third of four parts

his metal cot to vomit in the bathroom.

The graying rebel, three days into a hunger strike, lies down and stares again at his interviewer through pained, tired eyes.

"Tomorrow will be worse," he says. Looking at the charismatic guerrilla leader's deadened expression in the gray light of his dormitory-cell at a civil guard barracks, that is difficult to imagine.

Three years after Pastora and a group of Costa Rica-based comrades set out to form a southern front in the battle against Nicaragua's Sandinista government, their dreams of triumph appear to have been dashed.

Pastora's soldiers, who once had footholds in several outposts along the San Juan River and ranged freely through the sparsely populated swamps and cattle lands to the north, have been driven from the river and face ever stronger pursuit by Sandinista troops.

Another contra army, the Nicaraguan Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARN), which had been in the field two years before Pastora took up the cause and receives U.S. aid, continues the fight. But it has never had more than 500 soldiers and recruiters say they are having difficulty keeping men at the battlefield.

And Pastora, the only anti-San-

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Date of transcription 10/20/87

On June 12, 1987, retired General JOHN STINGLAUB was interviewed by Special Agent (SA) [REDACTED] FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (FBI), Assistant United States Attorney (AUSA), [REDACTED] UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE and Special Agent (SA) [REDACTED] UNITED STATES CUSTOMS (USC) at the MIAMI AIRPORT MARRIOTT HOTEL regarding [REDACTED]
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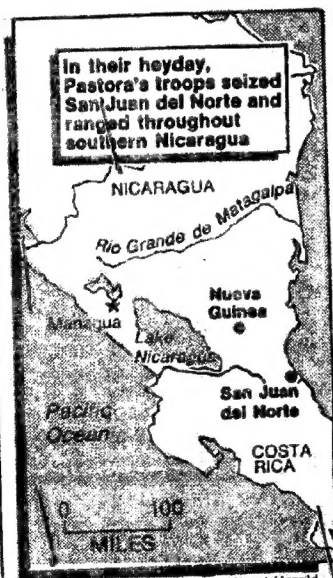
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Associated Press

Edén Pastora: Cut off by CIA.



The Miami Herald

edgeable rebel sources. Roberto Calderon, the commander of the Sandinista army in the south, said that in recent years, FARN troops simply "have not been active."

And as the CIA assumed a greater role in FARN operations, some longtime rebel supporters are said to be chafing.

Late last month, Singlaub showed up in Costa Rica, announcing that he had come to persuade Pastora to visit Washington.

Singlaub said U.S. officials wanted to offer Pastora a role "much like the role of Charles de Gaulle" coordinating activities of the French resistance from North Africa and London during the Nazi occupation.

He said Pastora had agreed to make the trip. A Pastora spokesman agreed, but said Pastora would decide what future role he assumes in the movement.

"Nobody made De Gaulle," said Carol Prado. "He made himself."

Wednesday: Taking the war to Managua.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

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the FDN. But Pastora adamantly refused, claiming that the FDN's top officers, most of whom had served in Somoza's brutal National Guard, were hated by the Nicaraguan people. Others said Pastora simply didn't want to share the leadership of the contra cause.

By April 1984, the CIA had cut Pastora off.

One Pastora aide said he realized the relationship had gone sour when ARDE fighters received what was to be a plane load of CIA war supplies. The boxes that came floating down at the prearranged drop spot contained not boots and ammunition but beans, rice and what appeared to be a lifetime supply of sanitary napkins.

"Many more sanitary napkins than the female comrades needed," the aide recalled.

Pastora traces the CIA campaign to cut him out of the contra movement to May 30, 1984, when a bomb exploded at a Pastora press conference, killing four and wounding two dozen more, including Pastora. The bomber's identity has never been established.

Pastora went to Venezuela to recover from burns, returning weeks later to a fierce internal power struggle. Alfonso Robelo, the former Sandinista junta member, left ARDE in July, exasperated with Pastora's continued refusal to join forces with the FDN.

Pastora scraped to continue the fight and supported his men on handouts for a year, spitting epithets in response to periodic peace offers from the FDN. Finally, the CIA began trying to persuade his deputies to split from Pastora.

Pressure to oust Pastora

As Congress moved to approve a \$27 million aid package last June, UNO was formed, in part to channel the funding. Rebels say it was then that agents from the CIA's station in San Jose approached Pastora's operations chief, Adolfo "Popo" Chamorro, and other ARDE officials about receiving U.S. aid.

The condition, rebels involved in

the contacts said, was always the same: Pastora had to be moved out.

In July of last year, Chamorro met in Washington with Marine Lt. Col. Oliver North, a senior National Security Council staffer who, according to U.S. officials, has served as a key manager of the contra program since the CIA was barred from directly aiding the rebels in mid-1984.

According to several ARDE sources who requested anonymity, Chamorro and others within ARDE began quietly selling the idea to Pastora's field commanders. Rebels from the FDN and FARN made similar contacts.

Pastora allies in Congress did try to pressure the Reagan administration to broaden the aid flow to include Pastora's troops. But CIA operatives on the ground apparently remained convinced that Pastora had to go.

When Pastora, after years of refusal, finally agreed to close ranks with the FDN and FNO, CIA officials refused to go along. Retired Major Gen. John Singlaub, who has served as an administration liaison to the contras since 1984, said he and Pastora signed an agreement March 26 under which Pastora would receive aid in return for moving his forces deeper into Nicaragua and coordinating with UNO.

Asked why the agreement was never carried out, Singlaub said, "Some people feel he's too much of a problem. They decided if he can't fit into their mold, he's no damn good. It reflects amateurism on the part of the handlers."

Meanwhile, in Nicaragua in March, a 120-man FARN unit received at least two airdrops of U.S.-supplied uniforms and boots from a privately contracted cargo plane. The FARN troops shared the supplies with nearby ARDE troops as enticement to dump Pastora.

Still, senior U.S. State Department officials apparently were promising Pastora and his allies that U.S. aid would soon reach them. Alfredo Cesar, a leader of an ARDE-allied group, the Southern

Opposition Bloc (BOS), said Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams told him April 8 that BOS "would receive political support and part of the aid" to the rebels if Congress approved President Reagan's request for \$100 million in contra aid. Abrams "spoke of a minimum of \$5 million," Cesar said. There was no mention made of Pastora's removal.

Cesar relayed Abrams' promise to four of ARDE's five regional commanders and three deputies who already were negotiating an agreement to join FARN.

But the commanders told him CIA operatives were saying just the opposite. "The Americans we've been talking to have said that the only way we will ever receive aid is by signing" an agreement abandoning Pastora.

The commanders went along with what the Americans wanted. "Leonel," as the top ARDE commander was known, explained in a rare interview later that his men "saw that there was no solution with Eden. What were we sup-

posed to do?" He denied, however, that the CIA had pressured them.

Pastora, deserted by all but one of his commanders, announced he was quitting. He charged that the CIA had paid each of the commanders \$5,000 for their signatures. FARN officials said they provided the commanders with various sums for personal expenses in San Jose.

Robelo, for one, doubts Pastora's departure will hurt the contra movement.

But there are many who doubt that FARN, led by former Mahatma Chevrolet salesman and longtime anti-Somoza guerrilla Fernando "El Negro" Chamorro, can regain the military initiative that Pastora's group once had.

Despite receiving a regular flow of U.S. funds in the last nine months, FARN forces have hovered at around 250 combatants after reaching a peak of about 500, officials of the group say. The ARDE troops that recently agreed to join forces with FARN total 1,550 or less, according to knowl-